

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements & Rosters

Pension application of Francis Boggs R985
Transcribed by Betty Renick

f18VA
5/13/10 rev'd & supplemented 2/18/15

State of Virginia
Nicholas County

On the 21 day of October 1833 personally appeared before me the subscriber or Justice of the peace in and for the said County of Nicholas and State of Virginia Francis Boggs a resident of the said County of Nicholas and State of Virginia aged seventy nine years who being first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefits of the acts of Congress passed June 7 1832 that he entered the service of the United States and served under the following named officers or herein stated that in the year 1776 on the first day of March in the County of Greenbrier and State of Virginia declarant volunteered for a tour of twelve months as an Indian spy and was placed under the Command of Captain Matthew Arbuckle _____ officers names not recollected. Declarant was marched from the County and State aforesaid to the mouth of new river declarants ___ station at the mouth of Great Kanawha (Kanawha) where Point Pleasant now stands in obedience to orders from Capt Arbuckle declarant states he was engaged in spying by regular tours the country bordering the Ohio from the mouth of Great Kanawha to the mouth of little Kanawha and from the mouth of Great Kanawha down the Ohio to the Big Sandy river thence up Sandy and across the country to Great Kanawha again. Declarant states that the Indians made frequent inroads by way of Kanawha and Sandy rivers into the frontier settlements of Greenbrier County Virginia therefore the spys (spies) were constantly in the alert. Declarant was then discharged by his said Captain Matthew Arbuckle at the mouth of the Great Kanawha river having served twelve months as an Indian spy, a private soldier. Declarant remained a short time at the Station at the mouth of Great Kanawha river until the first day of May in the year 1777 declarant again volunteered for a tour of twelve months as an Indian spy at the mouth of Great Kanawha river and was placed under the command of Captain Zera Conley of Greenbrier County Virginia subaltern officers – names not recollected declarant was engaged during this tour in spying and watching the Indian war paths on the waters of Great Kanawha, Big Sandy river, Little Kanawha the head waters of Jackson river, the frontiers of Greenbrier County Virginia and many other places declarant cannot recollect the county nearly in a state of nature. Declarant suffered much from hunger and fatigue traversing an almost trackless _____. Declarant was ever ready and willing to obey the orders of his officers and to execute them with _____ all hazards. Declarant was then discharged by his said Zera Conley at a place called Strands Glades. Declarant thinks at that time in Greenbrier County Virginia now in Nicholas County Virginia having served twelve months an Indian spy, a private soldier. Declarant has no documentary evidence whereby he can prove his service this terminated declarants service he hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present and he declares his name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any state.

Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid.

Signed: Francis Boggs (His Mark)

To the several interrogatories prescribed by the war department declarant answers as follows

1. I was borned (born) in the county of Chester state of Pennsylvania in the year 1754
2. My age is recorded in my father's Bible which showed me to be borned in the year 1754
3. When called into service I was living in the county of Greenbrier state of Virginia and since the revolution I have lived in Greenbrier and Kenhaway (Kanawha) County Va __ live in the County of Nicholas State of Virginia on Big Elk River
4. My service was that of a volunteer soldier as an Indian spy
5. During my tours of service I __ became acquainted with Matthew Arbuckle who I understood was a regular office. I also saw Capt Conley (Combs?) and Capt Moseyman(?) if declarant ever saw any Continental __ he states that he does not recollect them
6. My discharges were signed by the officers under whom I served but they are all lost of mislaid (mislaid).
7. I am know to John Gives Jun. And William Boggs who can testify to my character, my age and as to their belief o my having been a soldier of the Revolution.

Signed (his mark) Francis Boggs

Letter in file dated August 1938 or 1939

“His claim for pension was not allowed as proof of service of six months during the Revolutionary War in a regularly organized military corps was not furnished.”

Southern Campaigns American Revolution Pension Statements and Rosters

Pension Application of Francis Boggs R985

VA

Transcribed and annotated by C. Leon Harris. Revised 18 Feb 2015.

[Capitalization partly corrected]

State of Virginia SS

Nicholas County

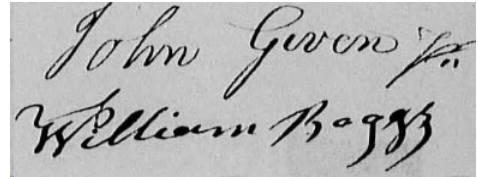
On this 4 day of October 1833 personally Appeared before me the Subscriber a Justice of the peace in and for the said County of Nicholas and State of Virginia Francis Boggs a resident of the said County of Nicholas and State of Virginia aged seventy nine years who being first duly sworn according to law doth on his oath make the following declaration in order to obtain the benefit of the act of Congress passed June 7 1832 That he entered the service of the United States and served under the following named officers as herein stated That in the year 1776 on the first day of March in the County of Greenbrier and state of Virginia Declarant volunteered for a tour of twelve months as an Indian Spy and was placed under the command of Captain Matthew Arbuckle subaltern officers names not reccollected Declarant was marched from the county and state aforesaid to the mouth of the Great Kanhawa river [sic: Kanawha River] passing by the mouth of New River Declarant was stationed at the mouth of Great Kanhawa where Point Pleasant now stands in obedience to orders from Capt Arbuckle declarrant states he was engaged in spying by regular tours the country bordering on the Ohio from the mouth of Great Kanhawa to the mouth of Little Kanhawa [sic: Little Kanawha] and from the mouth of Great Kanhawa down the Ohio to Big Sandy River thence up Sandy and across the country to Great Kanhawa again Declarrant states that the Indians made frequent inroads by way of Kanhawa and Sandy Rivers into the frontier settlements of Greenbriar County Virginia therefore the Spys were constantly on the alert Declarant was then discharged by his said Captain Matthew Arbuckle at the mouth of the Great Kanhawa River having served twelve months as an Indian Spy a private soldier Declarrant remained a short time at the station at the mouth of Great Kanhawa River untill the first day of May in the year 1777 Declarrant again volunteered for a tour of twelve months as an Indian Spy at the mouth of Great Kanhawa River and was placed under the command of Captain Zera Combs of Greenbriar County Virginia Subaltern officers names not reccollected Declarrant was engaged during this tour in spying and watching the Indian War paths on the waters of Great Kanhawa Big Sandy River Little Kanhawa the head waters of Jackson River the frontiers of Greenbriar County Virginia and many other places declarrant cannot reccollect the county being nearly in a state of nature Declarrant suffered much from hunger and fatigue traversing an almost trackless wilderness Declarrant was ever ready and willing to obey the orders of his officers and to execute them with despaeth all hazards Declarrant was then discharged by his said Zera Combs at a place called Strouds Glades Declarrant thinks at that time in Greenbriar County Virginia now in Nicholas County Virginia having served twelve months an Indian Spy a private soldier Declarrant has no doccumentay evidence whereby he can prove his service This terminated declarrants service He hereby relinquishes every claim whatever to a pension or annuity except the present and he declares his name is not on the pension roll of the agency of any state

Sworn to and subscribed the day and year aforesaid Francis hisXmark Boggs
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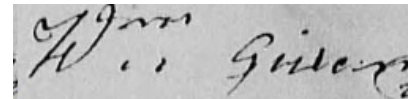
- 1 I was borned in the County of Chester state of Pennsylvania in the year 1754
- 2 My age is recorded in my fathers Bible which shows me to be borned in the year 1754
- 3 When called to service I was living in the County of Greenbrier state of Virginia and since the revolution I have lived in Greenbriar and Kenhaway [sic: Kanawha] County Va I now live in the County of Nicholas state of Virginia on Big Elk River
- 4 My sevis was those of a volunter soldier as an Indian Spy
- 5 During my towers of service I saw and become acquainted with Capt Mathew Arbuckle who I understood was a regular officer I also saw Capt Combs and Capt Moses Man [Moses Mann] If

declarant ever saw any Continental Redge [regiment] he states that he does not recollect them
6 My discharges were signed by the officers under whome I served but they are all lost or mislaid
7 I am known to John Givens Jun and William Boggs who can testify to my character my age and as to
their belief of my having bin a soldier of the Revolution
Subscribed and sworn to the day and year aforesaid Francis hisXmark Boggs

We John Given Jr and William Boggs residing in the County of Nicholas and State of Virginia hereby
Certify that we are well acquainted with Francis Boggs who has subscribed and sworn to the above
declaration That we believe him to be seventy nine years of age that he is reputed and believed in the
neighborhood where he resides to have been a Soldier of the revolution & that we Concur in that opinion
Sworn and subscribed the day and year aforesaid

Handwritten signatures of John Given Jr and William Boggs in cursive script.

and I the said Justice of the peace do Hereby declare my opinion after the investigation of the matter and
after putting the interrogatories prescribed by the War department that the above named Applicant was a
revolutionary Soldier and served as he states And I the said Justice further Certify that it appears to me
that John Given Jr and William Boggs who have signed the preceeding Certificate are Creditable persons
and that their statement is entitled to credit and I the said Justice further Certify that there is no
Clergyman residing in the Neighborhood of the above Named Applicant and that he from Bodily
infirmity is unable to travel to the Court house of the said County of Nicholas from whence he lives thirty
five miles And I the said Justice further Certify that the foregoing Contains the original Proceeding of
my self in the matter of the Application of Francis Boggs for a pension
In testimony Whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 4th day of October 1833

Handwritten signature of the Justice of the Peace in cursive script.

I Samuel Price Clerk of the Court of Nicholas County Do hereby Certify that William Given who has
Signed the preceeding Certificate is a Justice of the peace in and for the Said County of Nicholas and that
his official Acts is Entitled to Credit In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and Seal of
office this 8th Day of October 1833 & in the 58th year of our foundation [signed] Saml Price

Nicholas C. H. Va. Aug 27th 1834

Sir [James L. Edwards, Commissioner of Pensions] Mr. Francis Boggs of this County some time last
winter made a declaration before a single justice in the Country to obtain a pension as a Revolutionary
soldier under the act of June the 7 1832. It was transmitted to your department late in the winter and he
has not heard from it since His business was attended to in the Country by two Gentlemen of Lewis Co –
Lowther & Mitchel [Robert H. Lowther and William L. Mitchell] to whom it is said some suspicion has
been attached of an attempt to impose on your department & perhaps thereby it may have been
transferred to his claim. He is desirous of knowing what has been done with his claim & if any
informality exist let it be transferred here for correction – or whatever the result has been please state –
will you also state whether any pension can be allowed for services rendered against the Indians before
the battle of Bunkers hill [Bunker Hill, 17 Jun 1775] or Lexington [19 Apr 1775; see endnote]

With respect I am your obt servt/ Saml. Price

[The following report is by US District Attorney Washington G. Singleton who investigated hundreds of pension applications from present West Virginia, particularly those written by William L. Mitchell, Robert H. Lowther, and others from Lewis County – referred to in his report as the “Lewis Speculators.” For details see my appendix to the pension application of David W. Sleeth S6111. Singleton wrote in this report “Not entitled.”]

Francis Boggs – Applicant.

William Givens Esq High Sheriff of Nicholas county says that Boggs made his Declaration before him, at his home – he now recollects that the declaration alleged that Boggs had been nine months at Point Pleasant in the year 1774 [see endnote] – is satisfied that Boggs did not set forth any service against the British – that all the service he done was against the Indians [see endnote] – that Boggs was brought to his house by Wm L. Mitchell & Capt. Byrd – who wrote the Declaration there. Mr. Givens says that he could not have certified that Boggs was unable from infirmity to go to the county seat because he would have been certifying to an untruth – that Boggs was at the time and is still able to travel to the county seat without any sort of inconvenience. [See endnote.]

David Hanna [David Hannah R4573] aged 75 says Boggs & himself were raised in Greenbrier county. lived in the same neighbourhood and saw each other frequently during the war of the Revolution and have been neighbours ever since – he has no recollection of Boggs having done any service as a soldier, but he might have done some – if he did it was against the indians.

Mr. Boggs lived some 40 miles from any point at which I touched when in Nicholas the weather being bad and the road impassable. I declined going to see him – from the facts above stated & the further fact that his Declaration was written by Wm L. Mitchel (one of the Lewis Speculators) and sworn to before a magistrate in the country. – I was satisfied that he had no right to a pension. I however wrote to an acquaintance near Boggs to examine him which I have no doubt will be done. when received shall be transmitted [not found]

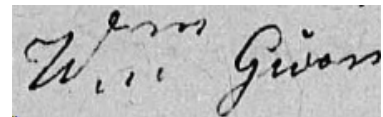
W. G. Singleton/ Jany 20, 1835

NOTES:

The pension act of 1832 provided only for service after the beginning of the Revolutionary War on 19 April 1775.

The 1832 act and the regulations for administering it provided for Indian Spies and volunteers in all kinds of service, but Singleton and Edwards decided that service against Indians on the frontier was not military. For further discussion see my appendix to the pension application of David W. Sleeth S6111.

According to Singleton’s report, a William Given stated “that he could not have certified that Boggs was unable from infirmity to go to the county seat because he would have been certifying to an untruth.” Someone named William Given did certify such a statement, however, as is evident from comparing the signature on that certificate transcribed above with that on a document from the pension application of Benjamin Lemasters S18490, as shown:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Wm Given". The ink is dark and the paper appears aged.

A typed summary in the file states that Boggs’s claim was rejected “as proof of service of six months during the Revolutionary War in a regularly organized military corps was not furnished.” The 1832 act has no requirement that service be “in a regularly organized military corps.” The official reason for the rejection was “Independent contemporary evidence adverse to his claim.” (*Rejected or Suspended Applications for Revolutionary War Pensions*. Washington, D.C.: 1852.)